

**BNSF**



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STATE OF WASH.  
HIGHWAY AND TRANSP.  
COMMISSION

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AUG 11 2003

WASH. UT. & TP. COMM.

August 4, 2003

Mr. William Shoemaker  
Director Public Works  
City of Sumner

Dear Mr. Shoemaker,

This letter is to advise that BNSF has completed all railroad track, signal, and crossing improvements in Sumner, WA, related to the Sound Transit commuter project and intends to increase freight train speeds 10 MPH (from 40 MPH to 50 MPH) between MP 28.0X and MP 28.5X (Puyallup Avenue to Zehnder Street). Our intention is to implement this freight speed increase September 2, 2003, then to implement a passenger speed increase from 65 MPH to 79 MPH after the city is able to install a recommended traffic light and repeater signal at Zehnder Street, no later than spring 2004.

In addition to our railroad improvements, Sound Transit has completed installation of median barriers at Main Street crossing, Williams Avenue grade crossing has been closed, and a new grade crossing at Puyallup Avenue has been opened on the north end of town which has diverted truck traffic from other crossings in Sumner, chiefly Zehnder Street.

BNSF is making these nominal increases in train speeds well within the limits set by the Federal Railroad Administration, which serves as our sole regulatory authority. Speed restrictions applied by a city or state are preempted absent a locally unique safety hazard, none of which exist between MP 28.0X and MP 28.5X.

BNSF will continue assisting the city of Sumner with the installation of a recommended traffic light and repeater signal at Zehnder Street, including consideration of the possible use of our crossing signal cantilever to mount a repeater signal. As always, we will keep your city advised of any changes to our operating plan and, as a courtesy, will continue to keep the WUTC informed as well.

Please call anytime if there are any questions, and as always, we appreciate the assistance of your city with railroad trespassing and grade crossing safety.

Sincerely,

Ron Jackson  
Northwest Division General Manager

cc : Mike Rowswell  
Doug Werner  
D. J. Mitchell  
Mike Cowles  
Walt Smith  
Glen Haug